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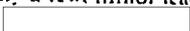
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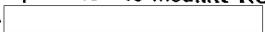
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NR Record

ROMANIA: Party Congress Underscores Ceausescu's Isolation

The party congress unanimously elected General Secretary Ceausescu to another five-year term and approved his orthodox agenda. Comparing his brand of Communism to a "Prince Charming," Ceausescu continued to reject the political and economic reforms sweeping Eastern Europe and reiterated his call for a meeting of Communist countries to discuss the ideological crisis confronting them. Only a few, minor leadership changes were made at the congress. 

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Comment: The congress provides further evidence of Ceausescu's increasing international isolation. The EC and NATO Ambassadors—except the Turkish envoy—boycotted the proceedings as did the Hungarian, the Japanese, and some Latin American Ambassadors. Several West European Communist parties not only failed to attend but also strongly criticized Romania's human rights record in public statements. Despite growing criticism, Ceausescu is unlikely to deviate significantly from his Stalinist policies or to be more forthcoming on human rights. Instead, he probably will increase contacts with other hardline regimes, particularly those in East Asia, and may look for ways—tighter border controls and increased restrictions on foreign journalists are possible—to insulate Romania even more from the pace of change. 

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